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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 828
By Pinion

A RESOLUTION to recognize the career of Emerson "Eli" Fly of Knoxville upon his retirement from the University of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the members of the General Assembly wish to congratulate Emerson "Eli" Fly, University of Tennessee acting President and former Executive Vice-President, as he retires after 41 years of outstanding service to the university; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fly spent most of his career in the business and finance operations of the university, serving honestly and effectively and rising to the highest ranks of university fiscal management; and

WHEREAS, he served admirably under five university Presidents—Dr. Andrew D. Holt, Dr. Edward J. Boling, Lamar Alexander, Dr. Joseph E. Johnson, and Dr. J. Wade Gilley; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fly also served with distinction as UT Executive Vice-President and concluded his career in 2002 with a year of outstanding service as acting President of the statewide UT system, in which position he inspired great confidence and respect among citizens throughout Tennessee and especially among members of the UT community, including alumni, faculty, staff, and students; and

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WHEREAS, he is a native Tennessean, born February 5, 1935, near Milan, Tennessee, graduated from Milan High School, attended UT-Martin Branch for two years, and then served his country in the U.S. Navy, where he was trained as a pilot; and

WHEREAS, he met his future wife, Catherine, in Milan and they married July 20, 1956; and

WHEREAS, the Fly family then moved to Knoxville where Mr. Fly continued his education, earned a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting in 1961, and became a Certified Public Accountant in 1962; and

WHEREAS, he was a Junior Accountant with Price Waterhouse and Company before being persuaded by UT officials to join the UT staff in 1961 as an Assistant Auditor; and

WHEREAS, he advanced to the position of Internal Auditor in 1968, and in 1973, he was promoted to Vice Chancellor for Finance at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where he was part of the top decision-making team for that campus; and

WHEREAS, he returned to UT in Knoxville in 1977 as Vice-President for Business and Finance of the statewide UT system, joining the staff of then President Edward J. Boling as the university's Chief Fiscal Officer; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, Mr. Fly was honored with a promotion to yet another top position within the university, becoming Executive Vice-President, the second-in-command to then President Joseph E. Johnson and directing day-to-day operations of the university system; in this senior position, he grew professionally and became even more respected for his fairness and sound judgment; and

WHEREAS, he answered the call of the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees on June 1, 2001, to serve as acting President of the university and executed the duties of the office with integrity, intelligence, and energy; and

WHEREAS, he has traveled throughout the state in the name of the university, advocating for higher education, encouraging alumni support, presiding at university events, all the while managing the university wisely and efficiently; and

WHEREAS, he is no stranger to the members of this General Assembly, having worked harmoniously and candidly with the legislature, its leadership, and its staff over a number of decades; and

WHEREAS, as acting President, he established as his top priority improving the quality of undergraduate education and set about reallocating resources to enhance the student experiences; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fly captained a sweeping reallocation study throughout the entire statewide university, wherein employees themselves were empowered to identify areas where resources could be redirected to strengthen the university's best programs; oversaw the writing of a comprehensive report for the General Assembly and testified personally before committees of the legislature concerning the report's findings; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fly's steady influence, his vast job knowledge, and his open communication with faculty and staff helped reassure the university family during unsettling times; and

WHEREAS, his wife, Catherine, has ably assisted him in official duties and events; and

WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Fly and their four children have between them attended or graduated from all four of the University of Tennessee's primary campuses—Mr. Fly at Martin and Knoxville, Mrs. Fly and a son at the Health Science Center in Memphis, another son and a daughter in Chattanooga, and a second daughter in Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fly has been active throughout his career in professional and civic organizations, including more than 35 years' service in the National Association of College and University Business Officers, which last year honored him with its Distinguished Business

Officer Award recognizing "outstanding contributions to business and financial management in higher education"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fly served admirably as President of the Southern Association of College and University Business Officers, was the higher education representative on the Advisory Committee of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board for five years, and is a member of the National Association of College and University Business Officers Accounting Principles Committee; and

WHEREAS, he was a charter member of the East Tennessee Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors and also served as its President, Chaired the Executive Committee of the Council of Business Affairs for the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, and served as advisory council chair for the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association/College retirement Equities Fund; and

WHEREAS, he is President of the University of Tennessee Foundation and serves on the Boards of UT-Battelle and University Health System, Inc.; is past President and Treasurer for Junior Achievement, Inc.; has been active in the Knoxville Chapter of the American Red Cross; and holds the rank of Commander in the Naval Air Reserve; and

WHEREAS, he and his wife are members of the First Christian Church; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That the members of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee heartily commend Emerson "Eli" Fly for his lengthy and valuable service to the State of Tennessee and the University of Tennessee and wish for him and for Mrs. Fly many years of health and happiness to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

